

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 00642 081650Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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-----018808 081702Z /45

O R 081600Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7418
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USNMR SHAPE BEL
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
DIA WASHDC
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 0642

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC
USCINCEUR FOR POLAD
USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, CY
SUBJECT: GOC CABINET CHANGES: COMMENT

: NICOSIA 0637 (DTG O R 081440Z MAR 78)

1. AT FIRST BLUSH, MOST STRIKING CHARACTERISTIC
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PAGE 02 NICOSI 00642 081650Z

OF NEW ADDITIONS TO CABINET IS THEIR ANONYMITY.
FOUR OF THE SIX NEW FACES ARE VIRTUALLY UNKNOWN
TO US AND OUR CLOSEST CYPRIOT CONTACTS. IN THE
MAIN THEY APPEAR TO BE CENTRIST OR CONSERVATIVE
AND IN MOST CASES TO HAVE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)
ASSOCIATIONS. IN ADDITION TO BEING LARGELY UNKNOWN,
THEY ARE UNTESTED IN LEADERSHIP ROLES AND CARRY A

FLAVOR OF MEDIOCRITY.

2. NICOS ROLANDIS (FOREIGN AFFAIRS) IS BEST KNOWN OF NEW APPOINTEES, A KYPRIANOU LOYALIST WITH STRONG TIES TO THE WEST. PETROS MICHAELIDES (JUSTICE) IS A RESPECTED SENIOR JUDGE. CATSELLIS (DEPUTY, INTERIOR) COMES FROM A LANDED KYPRENIA FAMILY WHICH OWNED HISTORICALLY BEST-KNOWN HOTEL IN CYPRUS, THE DOME; HIS APPOINTMENT ACKNOWLEDGES POLITICAL WEIGHT OF REFUGEES AND MAY INTRODUCE A NEW ELEMENT OF RIGIDITY INTO CABINET, ESPECIALLY ON MATTERS OF TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS. COSTAS HADJISTEPHANOU (DEPUTY, EDUCATION), FORMERLY NUMBER THREE IN THAT MINISTRY, IS A CONSERVATIVE; CREATION OF NEW POSITION FOR HIM CAN BE SEEN AS ATTEMPT TO COUNTERBALANCE MINISTER SOFIANOS, WHO IS CONSIDERED A LEFTIST AND DISTRUSTED BY THE RIGHT. ELIADES (COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS) IS COMPLETELY UNKNOWN TO US. PAPAGEORGIOU (COMMERCE) IS A DP LOYALIST, LONDON-TRAINED LAWYER AND CURRENTLY LEGAL ADVISOR TO BANK OF CYPRUS. THEODOULOU (LABOR AND SOCIAL INSURANCE) IS ANOTHER UNKNOWN. NEXT DAY OR SO WILL GIVE US OPPORTUNITY TO SIZE UP NEW PERSONALITIES AND REPORT REACTION THEIR APPOINTMENT.

3. MOST OF PREVIOUS MINISTERS RETAINED IN NEW
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PAGE 03 NICOSI 00642 081650Z

CABINET CAN BE SEEN AS COMPETENT, EXPERIENCED, AND (PERHAPS EQUALLY IMPORTANT) NOT VOCIFEROUS OPPONENTS OF KYPRIANOU. TWO OF THESE MINISTERS ESPECIALLY REPRESENT SOLIDITY AND CONTINUITY. ALTHOUGH PATSALIDES (FINANCE) WAS QUIETLY OPPOSED TO KYPRIANOU'S SUCCESSION, HE WAS RETAINED BECAUSE OF HIS PROVEN, GREAT COMPETENCE, INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION, AND KYPRIANOU'S NEED TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. IOANNIDES SERVES AS ANODYNE BUT RESPECTED SYMBOL, A VALUE WHICH KYPRIANOU ACKNOWLEDGED IN ELEVATING HIM TO NEWLY CREATED POSTION OF MINISTER TO THE PRESIDENT. VENIAMIN, ANOTHER IMPORTANT HOLDOVER, HAD DEMONSTRATED HIS LOYALTY AND USEFULNESS TO KYPRIANOU ON TWO OCCASIONS, THE KIDNAPPING OF THE PRESIDENT'S SON AND THE LARNACA INCIDENT. SOFIANOS WAS PROBABLY RETAINED PRIMARILY AS A GESTURE TO THE LEFT.

4. WE NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH NO CLERIDES SUPPORTERS WERE GIVEN MINISTRIES, THE COMPOSITION OF THE CABINET (WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF SOFIANOS) MEETS HIS INSISTENCE ON NON-INCLUSION OF THE LEFT AND GENERAL ACCEPTABILITY TO
.

5. IN ANNOUNCING NEW CABINET, KYPRIANOU SAID THAT
THOSE WHO WERE LEAVING GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE
THOUGHT OF AS NOT HAVING DONE EXCELLENT WORK.
NEVERTHELESS, WE NOTE THAT OF FOUR MINISTERS NOT
(CHRISTOPHIDES, SPANOS, KOLOTAS, AND
PIERIDES), ALTHOUGH THEY WERE QUALIFIED TO STAY
ON IN TERMS OF EXPERIENCE AND ABILITY, WERE OUTSPOKEN
IN VARIOUS DEGREES TO KYPRIANOU'S ELECTION. THE
DISAPPEARANCE OF SPANOS, A STRONG SUPPORTER OF TASSOS
PAPADOPOULOS, MAY SIGNAL A FURTHER WANING OF THE
LATTER'S STAR.
CRAWFORD

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PAGE 04 NICOSI 00642 081650Z

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Message Attributes

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